1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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243 311 423 ance is unknown. War or banditry may ruin a merchant, but a farmer will probably come through a period of disorder at least with his land intact and sufficient part of the crop to live on. Although public order in western Yunnan is now well maintained, it was not always so; even within the memory of men still quite young the roads were unsafe and one could not venture a few miles from the city without running the risk of robbery.

The peculiarity of the Min Chia system is not therefore the high value placed on land itself, but the exclusive preference for rice lands. If the lack of public security in the past was the only reason for high land values it would apply as much to the mountains as to the plain, indeed perhaps more, for the inhabitants of a mountain district would be too remote to suffer much risk of robbery or pillage at the hands of soldiery. The mountain lands, however, are not regarded as worth anything at all, they are not even owned. The whole surface of the mountain and its lower slopes is public land, or in other words free to all comers, waste, neither subject to rent nor tax. Yet, though certainly useless for rice cultivation, these lands if terraced could grow other crops, and are in fact covered with wild fruit bushes and forest.

The Min Chia therefore revolve in an economic vicious circle of their own making: rice cultivation alone is regarded as worth while, but as the area of suitable land is restricted it has become very valuable, and being valuable is regarded as the most desirable investment, which reinforces the importance attached to rice cultivation. Meanwhile, overlooking the rice plain of Ta Li, is a vast tract of waste land, certainly capable of exploitation, but which, being 438 mountain, the Min Chia farmer entirely ignores. Since the 435 whole of Yunnan, in common with the rest of south China, 511 also produces rice, and for the most part in sufficient quan-

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tity to supply the local markets, rice can never be an export crop for the Min Chia farmer. A quantity is sent up to Li Chiang and Chien Ch'uan, which having a colder climate, are less productive; but the cost of transporting rice on mule back, the only means of transport, is so high that this trade can never develop on a large scale. Therefore, in a good year the price of rice at Ta Li falls very low and the farmer's purchasing power declines proportionately ; in a bad year the quantity of rice harvested is not sufficient to provide an export surplus, and the poorer farmers, after paying their rice rents, have difficulty in living off the remainder of the crop, and cannot afford to make other purchases. The rice standard is therefore a check on trade and a factor causing the standard of living to remain low.

The Min Chia, who are in most respects a practical and hard headed people, were not unaware of these disadvantages, and sought to escape from them by producing an export crop which would not interfere with the cultivation of rice, and would yet command a good price in distant markets. Such a crop must have a high value for small bulk, for as it must be transported for at least two weeks on mule back to reach any market of importance (either Yunnanfu or Burma) no bulky inexpensive commodity would show a profit after the costs of transport were deducted. Such a crop they found in opium, which was introduced into Yunnan in the first half of the nineteenth century. Opium admirably fulfilled the conditions outlined above. It was planted on the rice lands as a winter crop, harvested in May before the rice seedlings are transplanted. Therefore it did not interfere with rice cultivation. It was light and fetched a very high price in the markets of Yunnanfu whence it was transported to other parts of China. It thus provided the Min Chia with, from their point of view, the perfect export crop, which brought outside money into the closed economy of Ta Li and

THE TOWER OF FIVE GLORIES

Towards mid-day a long line of Min Chia women with heavy pieces of wooden furniture, chests, benches and bed ends, on their backs, stagger slowly on to the fair ground. With the weight taken by a band round the forehead they have carried these loads from Chien Ch'uan and Ho Ch'ing, more than sixty miles to the north, and even for unladen men a three days' journey over the mountains.

Not far from the furniture sellers the pottery of Yung Pei, a town in the High Yang Tze valley one hundred miles to the north, is displayed. No pottery is made on the Ta Li plain, and apart from the Kiangsi ware used by the rich, all the pottery used comes from these Yung Pei kilns. Here one may see a cheap blue and white porcelain, mainly rice bowls, and a wide variety of earthenware vessels many of which reproduce in this coarse material the lovely shapes admired by connoisseurs in old Chinese porcelain. There are also the brittle, black clay cooking vessels from the district of Ma Kai south east of Ta Li, which are made from clay containing a high proportion of graphite, and are fire resisting. These cooking vessels, which sell for a few nickel in Ta Li, and for less than a nickel apiece in the district where they are made, almost entirely replace metal pots and pans for cooking. The only iron ware used in cooking are the large shallow cauldrons in which rice is cooked. These, too, are made in a neighbouring part of the province.

The busiest corner of the market is of course the produce section, where rice and vegetables are on sale, or are directly bartered for other commodities. Here the farmers can exchange one *tou* of rice for ten Chinese feet of cotton cloth of the standard width of one foot; and this is sufficient to make a complete suit of coat and trousers. A large part of the country produce brought to market consists of livestock, pigs, chickens, and some cattle. Horses are not in quite the same category as they are mainly used in the transport trade and the dealers are Chinese, Moslems or Tibetans. The price

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of pigs naturally depends on the age and quality of the animal, but 70 dollars Nickel, or fifteen shillings, is the usual price of a fat pig ready for slaughter. Pig bristles, which are one of the few local products which have a world market, fetch ten dollars Silver a catty, or about nine shillings for one and a quarter pounds weight. This is in Ta Li a high price, but it must be remembered that only the bristles along the spinal ridge of the pig are of any use, and the quantity obtained from one animal is not very large. Sheep, which, as has been pointed out, are not greatly valued or numerous, fetch about twenty dollars Nickel a head at most, as compared with seventy to eighty for a fat pig. Cattle, either for milking or draught, are a little more expensive, the prices ranging between twenty and thirty dollars Silver a head, or about fifteen shillings to one pound sterling. The price of a horse or mule varies a great deal, as there is a wide difference between the value of a pack pony and a good riding horse. Fifty dollars Silver, or about two pounds, is the lowest price, but a good mount may cost four times as much, and big, powerful mules bred on the Tibetan border, which can carry loads of two hundred catties (two hundred and fifty pounds), were selling for as much as four hundred dollars Silver or nearly £16 0s. 0d. a head. It is true that this high price was paid by army buyers at the autumn fair in 1938, and is not normal.

Although the character of this market remains much the same throughout the year there are seasonal changes. Thus in the beginning of autumn large numbers of quilts and warm coats are offered for sale, and in the summer umbrellas, "rain cloth"—a kind of local oil cloth—and palm fibre rain cloaks worn by the farmers, are in great demand, for the Min Chia, like the Chinese, hate getting wet. Towards the end of the lunar year, when the great New Year settling day is approaching, the market becomes very busy,

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301 The Tibetans spend relatively much money on their ornaments.
435 I quote the following prices: silver earrings for a man: $2 - $3 (at the time /17/ of my visit the Chinese silver dollar was the equivalent of US $0. 50; the Chinese paper money which even at that time had a considerably lower rate of exchange, was not accepted by the tent nomads), corals for these: $2 - $3; finger rings: one-half dollar. The heavy rosaries of fragrant wood with pendant cost from $4 to several hundred dollars, the thin ones: $1 - $3. The small silver boxes attached to the rosaries and worn on the chest cost $10 - $15; an additional $1 - $2 is spent for the coral in the center. Simple old-fashioned guns cost only $10, but the Fantzu pay $200 - $300 for good modern ones. Swords cost $2 - $40, depending on their decoration and the amount of silver and coral used. The women's earrings cost $4 - $15, while the brass earrings of the young girls cost no more than $1. The hair ornaments of the girls costs $0. 50, those of the women $10 to $100, depending on the amount of coral and whether they are made of silver or brass. Women's silver finger rings without corals or stones cost $1 - $2. The brass mounting on a hat costs 20 - 30 cents. The milking hook costs $2 - $10, according to its coral decoration. The women folk of the sedentary Fantzu wear much more expensive ornaments which may amount to several hundred dollars.

301 None of these ornaments is made by the Tibetans, but by the
439 Chinese who now frequently sell very cheap and inferior ornaments made of brass. However, the valuable and artistic ornaments come from Inner Tibet and Hsik'ang. Genuine corals and semi-precious stones (turquoise, malachite) are likewise imported from Inner Tibet, whereas imitation coral is also imported from China.

Dwellings and Pastures

361 The nomadic Fantzu are joined together in separate tent com-
621 munities, but these are very loose associations. Such a tent camp consists of 4 - 40 tents, the average being probably 20 to 25. The nomads change their place of residence three times a year. They move into the first tent encampment in April and remain there until July. From July to September they occupy the second camp. In September or October the nomads come down to lower altitudes and stay there until April or /18/ May. During this time they do not live in tents but in simple loam huts grouped together in smaller or larger units. Each family returns to the same house every year.

The individual tent communities, however, do not always consist of the same families; the tribal chief (Chinese, t'ou-mu) uses

342 front wall. A large part of the yard is set off by a low wall and serves
[343] as a cattle pen. Opposite this on the narrow side is a stall for horses and yaks, formed merely by a roof about 2 meters wide and open toward the yard. The house itself consists of two rooms about two meters high with simple mud walls and a Tibetan-style flat roof formed of horizontal wooden beams laid side by side, with layers of earth spread over them. The two rooms are furnished with simple k'angs which are heated from the outside, as in China. Almost all these winter houses look very dilapidated. Next to the winter houses one some-
[372 237] times sees large stacks of dried yak dung, resembling our haystacks.

Work of the Men and Women

512 The daily schedule and the work of the tent nomads is very simple. They sleep surprisingly little. They get up at the first hint of dawn and do not go to bed until two or three hours after dark. They only occasionally take a nap in the middle of the day. As soon as they get up, they milk their animals and drive them out to pasture.

462 The men work very little. Their favorite occupation is riding in company and paying calls, during which the main topic of conversation is pasture conditions and choice of pasture sites. When it
[294] grows dark they chat and drink tea. Oddly enough, the men make their own clothes.

462 For the rest, practically all the work falls on the women. They
234 must milk, make butter and dried curds. Cooking, however, takes little time, in view of the simplicity of the Tibetan diet.

283 The women also spin. The fleece is first /23/ washed in cold
462 water, wrung out and then dried on the meadow. In spinning they
286 wind the wool on a short wooden stick and, with a simple hand spindle consisting of a weighted wooden stick, they spin off a coarse yarn. The wool which the women spin they take to the sedentary Fantzu women who can weave a cloth used in making tsamba bags. The nomad women buy back this cloth with money, butter or wool. The cloth for their woolen coats and pelerines they have woven by
[435] Chinese in Ho-chou. The Chinese weaver gets one cent for a foot of material. The nomad women themselves know how to weave only the coarse yak hair cloth from which tents are made. The men and women also twist coarse ropes of yak hair which they use to stretch the tent material, for bridles and for tying up their horses. Other feminine handiwork, such as knitting and embroidering, is not done by the nomad women.

372 Gathering fuel is one of the important occupations of the women.
237 They must collect yak and sheep dung, dry it and stack it properly.

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234 of milk three times a day; an average cow gives two bucketfuls for the day. A milk bucket holds an average of /25/ 2 1/2 liters. The [415] buckets are made and repaired by Chinese. Good buckets are made of pine wood, first-class ones of cypress. Osiers are used as hoops.

The milk is drunk boiled or eaten as clabber. But most of the milk is used to make butter. Casein is derived from the buttermilk, and is filtered through a coarse bag, whereupon it is dried, stored in the form of coarse powder, and eaten. The whey is fed to the dogs. The butter is stored in mutton or yak maws, often for a long time, "up to more than 10 years." This old butter which gets very rancid is chiefly used in the lamaseries to feed guests at the festivals or to make Buddha images. Surplus butter is sent to the temple in which the son of the family is a lama. Lamas also often come to the tents and beg for butter, which is always willingly given to them. The price for old and new butter is the same. It comes to $0.50 per chin. (1) At home as well as in the temples old butter is made into

1. Chin, the Chinese pound, equals 605 grams.

lard in order to clarify it. This lard is used only as fuel for the sacrificial lamps.

236 The long yak hair from the animal's belly, back, and legs is plucked once a year in the fifth or sixth month. This is done by tying down the yak and winding the hair around a stick of wood and thus pulling it out in tufts. Yak hair is used to make cloth for the tent and for ropes. The latter are used to pull the tent widths taut, and as halters and hobbles for horses.

231 A four-year-old milch cow costs $15 to $20, an old ox ready
435 to be slaughtered, $12 to $13. Calves are not sold. Yaks are slaughtered mostly in September and October. Some of the fresh meat is eaten, most of it is hung up to dry. The dried meat is either hung in the tent or is packed in leather. In this packed state it is often given to a temple for /26/ safekeeping. A yak skin costs $1 to $4; a good yak tail costs 10 cents, a white one, 20 to 30 cents. Yak horns are used as snuff containers, rarely as drinking horns. They also serve as milk bottles for babies.

232 Cattle are raised only by the sedentary Fantzu, not by the tent nomads. But the tent nomads buy individual bulls for breeding, because they like very much to use crossbreeds between beef cattle and yaks. A cross between a male beef and a female yak is particularly valued (Chinese: pien-niu). The pien-niu grows larger than a yak and has somewhat shorter and more curly hair than the

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yak. Its tail is thick and bushy but, unlike the yak, is clearly de- 232
fined at the root. It has larger horns than the yak. The pien-niu gets to be over 20 years old, that is, older than the yak. Male pien-niu are always castrated and used as pack oxen. The pien-niu is valued because of its greater strength, its longer life and better milk production; it also withstands the warmer climate of lower altitudes better than the yak. For the yak breeder, therefore, the pien-niu has a similar position as the mule has for the horse breeder.

The pien-niu cow drops her first calf after 3 to 4 years. The 231
price of a milch cow fluctuates between $40 and $50, and is thus 435
twice as high as that of a yak cow. A yak maw full of butter is the annual rent for a good pien-niu. A maw contains about 18 chin. The cross between a male yak and a female beef cow is called szu-pien-niu in Chinese. It is not regarded as valuable as the pien-niu, although it also lives to be 20 years old. The szu-pien-niu has a bushy tail, smaller horns and above all weaker legs than the pien-niu. The price of a szu-pien-niu is $30 to $40. The cross between the yak bull and the pien-niu cow (chia-pien-niu) is valued even less. It has the same fur as beef cattle, but is larger. This cross-breed lives to be only 10 years old. It costs about $30. A cross between /27/ a bull and a female pien-niu is called ga-ba. It lives to be no more than 7 or 8 years old. A ga-ba calf is immediately slaughtered, and the mother is then milked.

After yaks, sheep (1) are the most important domestic animals. 231

1. With regard to breeds, see Hermanns 3), page 87.

One family seldom owns more than 700 sheep; but there are also families that have no sheep at all. In the community made up of 20 tents where I lived there were seven families who had no sheep. The total number of sheep in this community came to more than 9,000, which means an average of 700 per herd owner. Sheep are not leased. One figures 40 to 50 ewes to one ram. The sheep drop their first young at two years; it drops only one lamb. A good ewe is allowed to die a natural death; otherwise sheep are slaughtered when they are two or three years old. Wethers are slaughtered at three or four years. A good sheep costs $3 to $3.50, a fat wether [436] $9.

Like the yaks, the sheep are driven to pasture early in the morn- 233
ing and back to the tents at night. Some herd owners have simple, circular sheepfolds made of wooden beams next to their tents, into which they drive their sheep at night.

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236 The sheep are sheared once a year in May or June. Neighbors [476] help each other in this task without charge. It takes an average of two days to shear the herd of one family. A wether gives 1 chin of wool annually, a ewe, 1/2 chin. A chin of fleece costs 20 to 50 cents. At the time of my visit the demand for wool was so great 237 that the highest price was paid. A sheepskin costs $0.60 to $1. 435 However, skins of unborn lambs cost $2 to $4. A sheep gut is sold for $0.20 to $0.30; in He-tso, the nearest large town, the price goes 262 up to $0.40 when it is resold. More mutton than yak meat is eaten. Lambs are eaten only if they have died of some disease. The Fantzu do not drink sheep milk, but they use it for butter if they do not have enough yak milk.

231 /28/ The sheep often suffer from paralysis of both forelegs, and many die of this disease. Most of the animals die of starvation in February or March, especially if there has been much snow during [476] the winter. If a family loses all its animals, everybody helps out by giving them others. The tent nomads do not often keep goats, but the sedentary Fantzu often do, and they also drink goat's milk.

Every family has at least one horse. The Mewu-Fantzu have a small breed of horses that measures about 130 centimeters at the withers. These Tibetan ponies are somewhat smaller and lighter than the Mongolian ponies or those from the provinces of Ch'inghai and Kansu. They are closer to the tarpan (Equus gmelini) than the Przewalski type (1). These horses have a great deal of endurance

1. Compare Hermanns 3), page 164 ff.

and are especially adapted for use in mountainous terrain. They 232 have hard hoofs which are not shoed in the steppes. Good stallions 435 are selected for breeding, the rest are castrated at four years. These horses live an average of 10 years; the men break them in at 3 years. The average price of a riding horse is $40 to $50; the highest price is $100. No horses are imported, but horse traders come from T'ao-chou and He-tso, and the Mewu-Fantzu sell them horses. Mules are not used by the tent nomads; asses cannot stand the high altitude.

492 The simple horse bridles of leather with brass mountings are made and sold by the Chinese, likewise the iron snaffles and the stirrups which can be of iron or brass. The Mewu-Fantzu use Hungarian saddles /bocksattel/ the wooden frames of which are made by the sedentary Tebu-Fantzu on the northern slopes of the

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Min-shan, and sold to the nomads. (2) These frames are put together 242

2. Compare Rockhill, page 716 f. Wooden frames are used as pack saddles for yaks and pien-niu. These are also customarily used in China. Cf. Rockhill, Plate 26.

by the nomads among whom there are regular saddlers. The wooden frame is /29/ put on a thick felt pad which serves as a saddle cushion and is covered with gaily patterned pulu cloth. The saddle is slightly upholstered and is covered with leather; often it is decorated with brass mountings. A person who is worried about the health of his horse ties a bundle of gaily colored silk ribbons on its mane. This must be consecrated by a lama.

Each tent has at least one or two dogs. One of them is kept on 231
a chain fastened to a stake, the other is allowed to run loose. In the winter a hole is dug for the chained dog so that he can protect himself from the cold. The dogs get to be about 80 centimeters tall and have a very shaggy coat, especially in winter, of black, yellowish brown or yellowish gray color. They are very alert and bark at the slightest provocation. Often every dog of a camp will bark for hours, especially at night, when they catch the scent of some beast of prey. It is very difficult to approach a tent because of these dogs. One always has to have hands and pockets full of stones to be able to defend oneself against them. One can approach a tent without danger 231
only when its inmates hold back the unleashed dogs. Riders like to 411
carry a stick 60 to 70 centimeters long, to which is fastened a whip of leather about 1 meter long, with an angular iron tip. When they pass or stop at a tent they twirl it about to protect their horse from the dogs. You often see horses with large scars on their hind shanks 231
from dog bites; they are, of course, particularly skittish and often become restless even when they hear a dog bark far off. The dogs are fed tsamba and whey, sometimes also meat scraps. A good watchdog costs about as much as a yak; a less desirable one, as much as a sheep. The dogs are allowed to grow old and die a natural death. A good dog skin which is preferred as a cover for the couch, costs up to $10 or more, sometimes, however, only $2. [237 435]

/30/ The only useful crop which the tent nomads plant is oats. 243
As we said above, each family sows some oats next to its relatively low lying winter dwelling. The crop is planted in the fifth Chinese month and is cut green in the ninth and tenth. It is used as fodder for the horses in winter, less often also as yak fodder. All the oat

made mostly in T'ao-chou where there is a large copper and brass industry. A kettle of this type costs $10 to $20. The large copper /34/ tea kettles are also made in T'ao-chou, as well as the stands for the tea kettles and the tripods of brass or iron. The tsamba is kept in square, open wooden boxes; larger supplies are kept in bags. Chinese porcelain bowls are rarely used for tea and food, wooden bowls being commonly employed, and they are imported from Szechuan. (Sung-p'an or Nga-wa). Chinese from the region of Ho-chou also furnish cheap bowls made of birch wood. For cooking, large iron ladles are used which must not be touched by the lips nor come in contact with the rim of the food bowl. Homemade wooden spoons are also used in cooking. Small tablespoons, mostly of birch, are imported from the sedentary Fantzu who live in forested areas (for example, Sung-p'an, Tebu-Fantzu from the region of Cho-ni) or from Chinese.

The hearth is made of loam and is about 1/2 meter high. On the side it has three holes for adding fuel, and on top three corresponding circular openings on which cooking pots are placed. Sheep and yak dung are used exclusively for fuel, the former only to kindle the fire. The dung is collected only by the women, mostly by the younger girls, and carefully dried. Osier baskets are used for gathering dung. A large basket full of dried yak dung, enough for 2 days of cooking, costs 20 copper coins (4 cents). Matches are used occasionally, but the old flint (1) and steel are

1. Rockhill 1), Plate 9, Figures 2 - 4.

still commonly employed. The steel is placed in a silver handle set with corals. The fire is fanned with a simple bellows (2) made

2. Rockhill 1), page 709.

of sheepskin, to which is attached a crude iron tube. The skin is sewed to a cone-shaped bag, the point of which is attached to the iron tube. In blowing, the large opening (base) of the bag is rhythmically squeezed together with the lower arm. The hearth fire /35/ also serves to light up the tent. Butter lamps which consist of small, shallow copper and brass bowls about 6 centimeters in diameter, are used only for ritualistic purposes. Only carefully clarified lard is burned in them.

We can scarcely say that the tent nomads have any special